

## Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9413

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY ROME

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 00565

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-L

TAGS: EEC' PFOR, UK

SUBJECT: THE BRITISH PRESIDENCY: JANUARY 10  
AFRICA EXPERTS MEETING

SUMMARY: MOST OF THE AFRICA EXPERTS MEETING CENTERED  
ON A DISCUSSION OF SOUTH AFRICA. THE GROUP RECOGNIZED  
THAT THE NINE HAS NO POSITION ON SOUTH AFRICA OTHER THAN  
A DISAPPROVAL OF APARTHEID. THE EXPERTS THEREFORE  
AGREED TO DRAFT A PAPER ON THE ISSUE WITH RECOMMENDA-  
TIONS FOR MINISTERS. THE BRITISH VIEW THIS DECISION  
AS A SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD IN EC POLITICAL CONSUL-  
TATIONS. OTHER AGENDA ITEMS -- TRANSKEI, NAMIBIA,  
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ANGOLA -- RECEIVED BRIEF TREATMENT. RHODESIA WAS DIS-  
CUSSED INFORMALLY; THE ZIMBABWE DEVELOPMENT FUND WAS  
NOT DISCUSSED AT ALL. END SUMMARY.

1. FCO CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA HEAD MARTIN REID  
BRIEFED EMBASSY OFFICER ON THE JANUARY 10 MEETING OF  
THE EC AFRICA EXPERTS GROUP, WHICH HE CHAIRS. INI-

TIALLY, FIVE AGENDA ITEMS HAD BEEN PROPOSED, ONE OF WHICH, SUGGESTED BY THE GERMANS, WAS A DISCUSSION OF THE ZIMBABWE DEVELOPMENT FUND. REID SAID THE BRITISH WERE NOT KEEN TO INCLUDE THIS ITEM, BELIEVING A DISCUSSION WOULD BE PREMATURE AND IN THE WRONG FORUM. BECAUSE OF THEIR CHAIRMANSHIP, HOWEVER, THE BRITISH FELT THEY COULD NOT OBJECT. BUT LAST WEEK THE FRENCH QUIETLY RAISED THEIR OWN MISGIVINGS ABOUT A PREMATURE DISCUSSION OF THE ITEM AND ASKED WHETHER THE BRITISH WOULD HAVE ANY PROBLEMS WITH A FRENCH OBJECTION TO ITS INCLUSION. THE BRITISH NODDED, THE FRENCH PROCEEDED AND THE ITEM WAS DROPPED. THE REMAINING FOUR ITEMS WERE A) SOUTH AFRICA, B) TRANSKEI, C) NAMIBIA AND D) ANGOLA.

2. THE FIRST SUBJECT, SOUTH AFRICA, DOMINATED MOST OF THE DISCUSSION. MUCH OF THE CONVERSATION WAS EDUCATIONAL FOR SOME OF THE REPRESENTATIVES, REID SAID. (THE BRITISH INTRODUCED A BRIEF DESCRIPTIVE PAPER, AND NOT, AS WE WERE EARLIER TOLD, THE LONG POLICY STUDY THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAS BEEN DEVELOPING FOR SOME WEEKS. THAT PAPER, REID SAID, IS INTENDED TO BE AN INTERNAL DOCUMENT AND IS CONSIDERED MUCH TOO DETAILED AND SPECULATIVE TO BE USEFUL IN THE EC-9 FORUM.) THERE WAS WIDE CONSENSUS ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA AND AGREEMENT THAT THE NATIONAL PARTY IS PREPARED FOR SUPERFICIAL CHANGES BUT REMAINS FULLY COMMITTED TO APARTHEID AND THE HOMELANDS FORMULA. THERE ARE NEVERTHELESS SIGNS OF ENLIGHTENMENT OUTSIDE THE PARTY; URBAN MILITANCY IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

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IN SOUTH AFRICA IN THE LAST TEN YEARS. THE EXPERTS AGREED THAT NEITHER THE ANC NOR THE PAC ENJOYS MUCH SUPPORT INSIDE THE REPUBLIC.

3. REID SAID THAT THE LONG DISCUSSION ON SOUTH AFRICA, WHILE OFTEN ELEMENTARY, HAD SEVERAL IMPORTANT CONCLUSIONS. FIRST, THE GROUP AGREED THAT THE NINE HAS NO POSITION ON SOUTH AFRICA OTHER THAN AN EXPRESSED DISAPPROVAL OF APARTHEID. THE NINE EVEN LACKS AGREEMENT ON A SIMPLE FORMULA TO OUTLINE WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN IN SOUTH AFRICA. THE EXPERTS THEREFORE AGREED TO DRAFT A COMMON PAPER BRIEFLY EVALUATING THE PRESENT SITUATION, ASSESSING THE PROSPECTS, AND SETTING OUT GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF POLITICAL DIRECTORS AND MINISTERS. REID NOTED THE DECISION TO DEVELOP A POLICY DOCUMENT OF THIS KIND IS A NEW DEPARTURE FOR THE EXPERTS GROUP. SECOND, REID SAID, THE GROUP AGREED THAT THERE ARE FORCES AT WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA WHICH THE NINE COULD HELPFULLY ENCOURAGE,

PARTICULARLY THOSE THOUGHTFUL ELEMENTS WHO NEED  
ASSURANCE THAT THERE IS AN ALTERNATIVE TO WHAT SURELY  
LIES AT THE END OF THE COUNTRY'S PRESENT COURSE. REID

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COMMENTED THAT FOR SOME OF THE EXPERTS, WHO HABITUALLY  
REGARD ALL SOUTH AFRICAN WHITES AS "ONE HUNDRED PERCENT  
EVIL," THIS PART OF THE DISCUSSION WAS MOST USEFUL.  
FINALLY, THE EXPERTS AGREED THAT TIME IS CRUCIAL IN  
SOUTH AFRICA, AND THAT IF THE NINE IS TO HAVE ANY  
INFLUENCE, IT MUST ACT QUICKLY.

4. THE DISCUSSION OF TRANSKEI, REID SAID, CENTERED ON  
COMMON TECHNICAL PROBLEMS SUCH AS CONSULAR MATTERS.  
ON ANGOLA, THE FRENCH REPORTED ON THEIR RECENTLY CON-  
CLUDED MISSION THERE. REID SAID THE FRENCH NOW "THINK  
THEY HAVE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ANGOLA" AND WILL AT  
LEAST OPERATE ON THAT ASSUMPTION. THE FRENCH REPORTED

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THAT THE MISSION HAD SEEN NO CHANGE IN THE CUBAN PRESENCE IN ANGOLA. ON NAMIBIA, REID ANNOUNCED TO HIS COLLEAGUES THAT MARTIN REITH, HIS DEPARTMENT DEPUTY, WOULD SHORTLY VISIT WASHINGTON FOR CONSULTATIONS. REITH WILL REPORT TO THE EXPERTS AT THE NEXT MEETING.

5. RHODESIA WAS NOT FORMALLY DISCUSSED BY THE EXPERTS, REID SAID, ALTHOUGH PATRICK LAVER (RHODESIA DEPARTMENT) JOINED THE GROUP FOR LUNCHEON AND LED THE CONVERSATION. REID SAID THE EXPERTS' FORUM WAS NOT INTENDED TO ADDRESS CURRENT OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS BUT RATHER LONGER TERM ISSUES. BUT HE EXPECTS THE NINE WILL BE MORE FULLY BRIEFED ON THE RHODESIA SITUATION AT A HIGHER LEVEL.

6. COMMENT: REID WAS PLEASED WITH THE EXPERTS MEETING. HE SAID HIS COLLEAGUES ARE ALL COMPATIBLE AND THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE SESSION WAS RELAXED. HE BELIEVES THE BRITISH PRESIDENCY IS OFF TO A GOOD START AND THAT THE DECISION TO DEVELOP AN EXPERTS' PAPER ON SOUTH AFRICA IS A SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD IN EC POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS. END COMMENT.

ARMSTRONG

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